

Spartan 058 The Tale of a Sniper

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Summary: This is the story of Linda, Spartan 058, this is my first post to this site and my second FanFic, the story follows this striking sniper through the periods before and during Halo 2. Enjoy! Also please remember that this was written before GoO

1. Spartan 058 The Tale of a Sniper Chapter

Spartan 058 - The Tale of a Sniper

Chapter 1 - Near Covenant battle station _Unyielding Hierphant_

Linda sat there in awe, after just infiltrating the Unyielding Hierophant and barely escaping just to find that their two highest ranking comrades were about to sacrifice their lives to take out a substantial chunk of the Covenant's fleet when the mobile station blew. A voice came through her speakers, " Linda, take the NAV station. Fred, you're on Ops. Will, give the Sergeant a hand at Weapons One." Linda snapped into attention and headed for her specified station. Will sat by the Sergeant stating that a COM patch had been established when Admiral Whitcomb appeared on one of the foward viewscreens standing on the bridge of _Ascendant Justice_, while Lieutenant Haverson sat in the background fiddling with the Covenant flagship's controls. Linda just sat at her stations checking her viewscreen every now and then while she listened to the Chief and Admiral's conversation. She gasped as the Admiral brought the artifact from Reach into the viewscreen, _"How could this be possible?" _she questioned to herself, _"Locklear blew the artifact along with himself back at the pirate station!" _ A holographic stand was brought into view answering Linda's question quickly. She caught small parts of the converstation as she tried to focus on the NAV controls. Linda watched as the Clarion Spy Drone's image showed the _Ascendant Justice _slam into the station's central ring structure. Static filled the viewscreen until a bloodied image of the Admiral came back on, with Haverson in the background with a clearly broken arm. After sending a system wide transmission resulting in a wave of

Elites surrounding the ship. The station's reactor meltdown could become visible on the outside as the station started to become a dull red color. "Move us back, Linda," John said. "Keep us in the moon's shadow. Use as much power as we can spare." She tapped the necessary controls as she gave the Chief a reply, "Aye, Chief," she replied. "Forward thrusters answering one third reverse power. Course one-eight-zero." On the screen Linda could see sparks coming from the sealed doors, meaning that the Covenant were coming. The Admiral gave last orders to the Chief and asked him something about some Alamo, which she could only guess at, just as the Elites bursting through the bulhead, the Admiral started to fire just as the viewscreen burst into static. After pulling back out from the moon the Spartan saw the remnants of the Covenant's once mighty fleet, maybe a dozen remained out of the round about guess of five hundred. "A brilliant strategic victory," John whispered. "Cortana, get us out of here."

She just sat there without her armor on, deep inside of the _Gettysburg's_ decks_ summing up the past days events: her awakening from her painful surgery, the recovery, the pirate station, and the trip to the _Unyielding Hierphant_. Her recovery was still in effect, and she felt it with every movement of her body, but she really couldn't complain. After claimed dead she fought her way back into this all to real world, but it was a good world, and she was happy to be back in it alongside the remaining Spartans. But would they be any good now that the Covenant knew the location of Earth? She had just witnessed the true power of the Covenant, even though they destroyed that all powerful fleet, the Covenant would surely be back with another, and probably much faster than the last. Wherever the Covenant were though she knew that she would be there too fighting with a renewed vengeance, they had killed her once but they'd something big to kill her again. she would make sure of it. "ETA to Earth in three hours," Cortana's voice announced through the ship's COM speakers. Hopefully Earth's orbital MAC guns would be operational by the time the Covenant came knocking, she always knew that the Covenant would find Earth but she had never thought of it as a now factor, only something that would eventually happen. The Chief interrupted her in mid thought, "Try to get some sleep, from all of the things you've been through you deserve it." She started to protest but the Chief's gaze changed her mind, "Ok Chief, but don't forget to wake me up when we reach Earth, or I'll be coming for you instead of the Covenant. The Chief let out a smile and a small laugh, which he quickly stopped as he remembered the consequences, "Roger that, now get some shut eye."

2. Spartan 058 The Tale of a Sniper Chapte...

Spartan 058 - The Tale of a Sniper

Chapter 2 - _En Route _to the planet Earth

Linda ran through the corn field on her family farm, laughing all the way as birds of every sort flew through the air. She was home, she could smell the pie her mother was making inside the home, she could hear her yelling. "Linda wake up," the voice said, she pondered the thought of why her mother would ask her to wake up. She woke with a start to find John staring down on her, "Linda we are near Earth, get preped and ready, we'll be in the system within moments." Washing away the pleasantries of the dream, she assembled her MJOLNIR armor with the care and expertise of a trained technician. She could hear

the groan of the strained _Gettysburg _as it exited slipspace, the Chief's voice came through the mounted speaker in the corner, "All crew, report to Docking Bay 7, departure to Athens Station in five." The COM snapped off, Linda grabbed her S2 as she rushed out of her quarters to take the elevator to Bay 7.

For all it was worth Linda, Will, Fred, and John tried to look their best, but their suits dissagreed, after a week of constant fighting it was a miracle the suits were still in one piece, much less operational. They took the small dropship to the stations docking bays, and quickly landed, and after a quick security check they were on their way to the ships command center. A group of officers mingled around checking computers and the like, a black haired female officer strode towards the group of Spartans and the Sergeant. "Keyes, Miranda Keyes," the dark haired women said, Linda could have sworn she heard the Chief's heart drop at the sound of the name. "It's good to see you back, after I heard the report about Reach I had feared the worst," said Miranda, she seemed to be looking around for another. "Where's my father?" she pressed.

Linda sat outside the conference chamber after departing with Sergeant Johnson, who was in search of a cafeteria of some sort, she could hear the Miranda's sobbs through the door as the Chief reminisced about the events following Reach until now. After several minutes, a teary eyed Keyes came out followed by a grim faced John. "Please follow me into the Briefing Room," said the demoralized Keyes. After a short walkthrough of the building through corridors with giant windows that had monstrous views of Earth, Miranda led them into a large room with a holographic screen and plenty of high ranking officers, one of them was a scowling Ackerson who was sitting by the highest ranked Lord Hood. "Good to see your back Chief, I'm sorry to hear about your fellow Spartans," commented Hood, "I'm sure they gave one helluva fight before they went down." The Chief's face was as hard as rock, "I'm positive they did," said John, his voice not giving any emotions. Linda could only smile about that behind her polarized visor, she knew that her brothers and sisters would never go down without a good fight, just look at her, she had gone down fighting and was rewarded with a renewed life. "Yes I'm sure of it, but returning to more recent news, the Covenant. As I have heard you've knocked out a substantial part of the invasion fleet which should buy us more time, our main priority is to get the MAC grid online and ready for whenever they do decide to barge in. As for your team, they will be split up on different MAC platforms, if one of them gets hit I don't want to lose the whole group understood?" The Spartan's all nodded. "Chief, you will stay aboard the Cairo, Linda you and Fred will board the Athens, Will is to be stationed on the Malta," continued Hood, "shuttles will take you to your designated stations, and by the way your new suits have just arrived."

3. Spartan 058 The Tale of a Sniper Chapter...

Spartan 058 - The Tale of a Sniper

Chapter 3 - On board MAC Station - Cairo

All of the Spartans save the Chief sat in the hangar bay, conversing about what they thought would happen next.

"You know what, they probably stuck me on the Malta all alone because

they know that that one is going to get hit first," Will remarked with a smile.

The Spartans all started to laugh, Linda thought that it was good that they could spend some time together sharing a laugh and telling humorous stories from their childhood. The atmosphere around her seemed to be full of high spirits and good times, it was the calm before the storm, one of those things everyone knew was coming but just kept pushing back into the far reaches of their minds.

Linda just sat in the corner alone, adding new modification's to her S2, she was where she needed to be, alone with her rifle waiting for the pivotal moment that would turn the tides. She was a sniper and she always would be, she knew her duty, but lately the rest of her comrades had been easy on her, that was probably the reason Hood had stationed her with Fred. She knew her limitations but the brass seemed to be trying to keep her healthy. She gave a smile, she knew the major downside of being with Fred was sharing all of those kills.

The Chief strode up behind the group as they were getting the last of their equipment stowed away on the pelican, she could tell by the Chief's movements that something was bothering him, Linda knew exactly what he felt, the thought of leaving his brothers and sister alone again to face the wrath of the Covenant without him. She made sure that she would do her best to stop his worrying.

"Our new suits should arrive within the hour, about the same time you should be prepped and briefed about your tasks on the platforms, I hear they're supposed to be top notch, tons of new upgrades like shielding and an auto binoculars built into the lens. When the Covenant do attack keep on your toes and give em hell, and by the way, don't do anything I wouldn't do," John said with a hint of laughter behind his voice.

"Well that rules out a whole bunch now doesn't it," said Will with a laugh which caused the whole room to join in.

"It sure does, good luck Spartans," John said as he turned and walked out of the bay.

The Spartans finished loading and all got strapped in ready for their flight to the MAC Stations.

"Your suit's a bit different than all the other ones," said the old tech officer, "It has a 30X zoom and a hip compartment for extra bullets or any designated sidearm, you barrel also has a special new barrel which can reach targets from a significant distance."

A good chunk of time passed by as the tech officer went over the new suits functions and controls. The new suit was a weapon of it's own, with an increased shielding system that recharged in nearly half the time and a jump capability of nearly two meters was extraordinary, it matched herself and her fellow Spartans perfectly, but then again they were the only ones that could wear the magnificent suit.

"You may notice a new HUD display too, we had to alter it a bit after complaints about not being able to see any second weapon's properties. Your current health bar is now gone because we decided that you would probably know when you were taking a couple of shots,"

the little old man said with a smile and a small chuckle to himself. "I'm all done with you so your free to go, I think your friend's waiting outside for you.

"Thank you again," replied Linda as she walked out of the lab.

Fred sat outside waiting for her so they could find their quarters and explore the station a bit more, "Aren't these great?" Fred asked as he looked down at his own suit, "They've done quite a bit since we've been gone...after Reach. Enough about that though, where should we go, we have some time off I suppose."

Before Linda could answer though the station's COM burst open with a loud voice, "We have Covenant targets at the edge of the system, stand by."

"Lets get prepped before we get stationed on welcoming duty!" Fred exclaimed as the staion burst to designated stations.

4. Spartan 058 The Tale of a Sniper Chapte...

Spartan 058 - The Tale of a Sniper

Chapter 4 - On Board MAC Station - Athens

Chaos rung through the first few minutes of fighting, Fred and Linda were both there when the first Grunt had busted through the airlock, that Grunt was the first so get a S2 bullet in the forehead.

Linda fired several more shots, she paused to reload. "This is to easy Fred, can this really be the invasion force that we all thought was coming?" Linda questioned.

"I'm not sure, but then again, who could be mad about having less resistance?" Fred said with a hint of relief.

"I definatly could," Linda remarked as she dropped four more Grunts with four cracks of the rifle.

Several minutes ticked off of Linda's mission clock, something was wrong, not about the Covenant's lack of vigilance, but of the whole situation. Something just didn't fit right, and she didn't feel like sticking around to see what it exactly was. She turned to Fred and gave him the all clear signal. He pointed to a small group of blips in the distance.

"Look at that, those Elites have something with them," said Fred in a curious tone, "What the hell could it be?"

"I'm not sure, but we better find out and fast."

Linda rounded a corner and saw several Elites guarding the hallway into a small hangar bay, she fired a round on the run, successfully gutting the Elites disfigured skull from stem to stern. The other got several rounds from Fred's assault rifle in the stomach with a quick smack of his rifle butt to the face.

"Doors are locked, and it feels like their braced, no way of getting in," Linda replied, her voice calm and steady.

Fred sat for a moment obviously pondering what to do next, but what to do with no way in? "There's gotta be a back door, lets cut back and exit the station and float in from zero gee, whatever they have in there is important, and they aren't wanting us to see."

Linda hated backtracking, almost as much as she hated the Covenant, they passed through multiple corridors with the remnants of bodies both human and alien. One even tried to get up but got a bullet in the back of the head for stirring. They got to another launch bay only one hundred yards away from the Covenant's temporary holding cell. After making sure no personel were inside they began the opening of the massive steel doors.

Linda opened a COM to Fred, "We need to get in and get out asap, we'll find out what the Covenant have got and get back to fending off borders." Fred's acknowledgement light went off as the two pushed off into space towards the adjacent bay.

A small boarding ship was attached to the main viewing window on the bay's door, Linda could see the half dozen Grunts moving through to accompany the Elites who had slipped through with their 'cargo'. This 'cargo' of the Covenant's had a striking appearance, it looked like a enlarged purple jellybean with small spikes protruding in every direction making it look like an inflated sea urchin. The words slammed into Linda's mind as she realized what in the world it could be.

A bomb.

Diminishing her negative thoughts she quickly reacted, she told Fred of the unfortunate news and went on to tell him her plan. The Covenant had been thinking since their almost fatal attack on Reach the couple of weeks previous. They knew what those MAC guns could do and they wanted them gone. Gone away so they could glass the planet with relative ease, tricky basterds. All she needed now was a plan, because if she didn't more platforms would fall.

5. Spartan 058 The Tale of a Sniper Chapte...

Spartan 058 - The Tale of a Sniper

Chapter 5 - Outside of MAC Station - Athens

"Fred, the Covenant have got a bomb, they're trying to break through the guns." Linda replied with a sense of haste. "We've got to try and warn them, before it's to late."

Fred just turned around and calmly replied, "I think it's to late for that now."

Linda watched as a small troop ship started to leave the station, leaving the bomb and it's Elite protectors, "Fred we need to leave, there's nothing we can do, I could take out the Elites but that wouldn't diffuse the bomb, and by the time we got there we'd be blown away with the rest of the station." Linda replied with said with sadness on her tounge. "Come on, lets try to hitch a ride, push of the wall when you think the time is right, and above all else hold on."

The two propelled themselves off into the blackness of space as the dropship came their direction, she bounced off the front edge but managed to grab a handhold on the topside, Fred had latched onto one of the ship's stubbly so-called wings. Linda second questioned her decision as a voice burst through her speakers, "I don't believe it! Their retreating, WE WON!"

Linda could only close her eyes and mourn for those who would be lost soon enough and for Will who was most likely as dead as the rest of them, those arrogant fools, didn't they know that the Covenant never retreated? She would never hear that answer as the station exploded and enveloped in flames, next thing she knew a hurtle ball of metal exploded on the aft section of the craft and sent her into unconsciousness, her last image was of Fred straining towards her, with his armor smoking up a storm.

"Linda, wake up we've got to move," Fred urged her as she regained her thoughts, "We crashed, I finished off the surviving Covie's and tried to radio in some kind of evac, John's ok, he managed to stop the Covenants bomb and is en route to here, Will's a different story, there was a problem with his suit so he had to come planet side for repairs, he's ok, but he's halfway around the globe."

"How long has it been since the station blew, I remember hearing the man on the COM and seeing the Malta blow, and then the Athens went, and why do we always have to land hard?" Linda replied, her eyes still somewhat blurry.

Fred could only let out a weak chuckle, "We haven't had a good landing in awhile have we? It's been about forty-five minutes since we were hit, I heard over the COM that the Covenant were only landing here in New Mombassa, strange isn't it, everything is strange about this op."

"Sometimes strange isn't such a bad thing, look at us."

The techie stood behind Will installing the last components to his armor, "I'm sure they got off that thing before it blew," the man said in a comforting voice.

"They did, I can feel it," Will said with a cool tone.

"Hey when they get back don't worry I won't stand in your way," the tech said.

"It's not that, it's just that they are my brothers and sisters, they are the only family I've ever known."

The techie just nodded his head, "Well you're all done, I hope things go good for you, good luck out there."

"Will come in, we're planetside and we're in New Mombassa, try to find the Chief, he's landed somewhere near our location awhile back, last we heard he was heading for the Covenant's Scarab, wait hold on," Linda's voice broke the silence in Will's mind. She paused for a second as another channel forced its way into Linda's helmet, "Ok Will, that was Cortana, she says they are going after the lone flagship over New Mombassa, she said something about escape."

Just then Will's COM went silent.

6. Spartan 058 The Tale of a Sniper Chapter...

Spartan 058 - The Tale of a Sniper

Chapter 6 - Sacramento, California, Mechanical Beta Station

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"Linda! Please respond," Will shouted, he knew she wouldn't but he kept on trying anyways, "If you copy respond now!" His mind was racing, he knew that Linda had already "died" once, and he didn't want there to be a second time. Will bolted out the tech room door, he had to get to Linda and Fred fast, he knew they probably wouldn't last long alone in New Mombassa. As he ran through the labyrinth of corridors he pondered on what could have made Linda's COM go silent, Covenant maybe, or was it something larger like a plasma torpedo. Only time would give him the answers and he was running out of it.

The glare of flashlights woke her up in the midst of the night, what were these people doing? She remembered the face of one of the four men, he and a nice looking lady had talked to her as she was walking home from school. But what was he doing here again, in the middle of the night at her home? One of the other men grabbed her while another pulled out one of her fiery red hairs, no tears came from her emerald eyes as she was taken from her home and put into a large van.

Linda awoke screaming in pain, her body burnt and smelled of flesh, a large piece of ferrocrete was pinning her down mid-torso, she could tell her lungs were punctured by the ribs because breathing hurt and was short lived. Thankfully her head was untouched, she wished she could say the same for the rest of her body, her COM didn't work but some of her other systems did, her suit was running at 30 efficiency. She remembered talking to Will, and then the explosion came, it rocked her eardrums and sent her to the ground as the building crumbled, she could remember Fred screaming as well. Fred! She had completely forgot about him, she looked around for signs of him and spotted his fluorescent green hand poking out of a pile of rubble. She knew that she needed to get to him, she grabbed the ferrocrete and with the help of a steel bar was able to move it enough for her to get out. Her legs weren't broken just sore beyond belief, it was her chest she needed to worry about, but all these things she pushed to the back of her mind, her main priority was to get Fred out. She dug for nearly two hours exposing more and more of Fred's feeble body, he was unconscious and badly hurt, but he would probably make it if they made it to a nearby med station or hospital. The roar of a Pelican ahead made her sigh in relief, with much pain due to her punctured lungs, as she saw a Spartan rapell down, his FOF tag showed that he was Will.

"Thank God, are you okay Linda?" asked Will as he rushed to her side and started helping her dig out Fred.

"Things could be better, I was worried that you wouldn't make it off in time before the bomb blew." said Linda with a hint of worry in her voice.

"Oh don't worry about that, twenty minutes after I got on board they

shipped me planetside, instead of my suit getting sent up they got a mystery box filled with a hundred jars of mayonaise," Will said with a laugh, "I can't wait till I find the person who made the mistake because I want to thank him for getting me off of there."

They finished getting Fred out thanks to the arrival of Will after about twenty more minutes of moving.

"His vital signs are pretty low, we need to get him to somewhere where we can patch him up soon, and the same with you to," said Will as he and Linda loaded him onto a stretcher and into the Pelican.

"Don't worry about me I'll be fine, let's just worry about the tast at hand, from what I know the Chief and Cortana followed the Prophet of Regret into slipspace, the explosion from them leaving inside of an atmosphere was what blew me and Fred on our asses," said Linda as the two of them flew miles above the ground to the nearest med station. "We'll probably end up with cleanup crew around the area to look for living Covies."

"Do you have any idea where the Chief was going? Or why?" asked Will who was still absorbing Linda's last statement.

"None whatsoever, I guess we'll just find out when he gets back from doing what he does best," remarked Linda.

They were coming up on a medical facility in northern Germany to undergo Fred's surgery when Will's COM snapped to life, Miranda Keyes voice came through.

"We're in uncharted space near another Halo, the Covenant say that it is Installation - 05, we'll remain in contact as much as possible."

The COM snapped off.

Will's head lowered, "Here we go again."

7. Spartan 058 The Tale of a Sniper Chap 7

**Spartan 058 - The Tale of a Sniper
>Chapter 7 - Berlin, Germany UNSC Medical Hospital

All Linda could do was think about the Chief explaining what had happened on the first Halo, the Covenant, 343 Guilty Spark, and the Flood. She wondered if the Flood would be there as well, she could only assume and hope for the best. As more gruesome thoughts burned their way into Linda's mind, Will walked in to the immense cafeteria.

"He's goin to be fine, the doctor said that he must have gotten hit on the head pretty hard, but even I could have told them that judging by the size of that dent in his helmet." said Will in a warm soothing tone.

"I hope that we can get out of here soon, we've got to prep before the Covenant attack again," said Linda in a not to reassured voice. "This was one of our few wins even though we barely managed that and

I just want there to be another one the next time the Covenant come knocking."

"That's true, anyways the Doctor said Fred should be good to go in about twenty minutes, and I can't wait to get out of here!" said Will.

The three Spartans sat in the aft hold of the Pelican as it ascended into space toward Cairo Station, Lord Hood had ordered the three of them up as soon as Fred was walking in a straight line again. The flight had little conversation as their minds were all on the Chief and his recent mission on the second Halo ring. They pulled into the hangar bay and moved quickly into the control room of the massive station.

"Welcome, I hope u had a good stay on Earth," said the Admiral with somewhat of a smile, "It's been a few days since we've heard from Miranda and the Chief, and all we can do now is hope for their safe return, but turning our attention to more local problems, refitting and repairing our fleet. The Covenant managed to knock out thirteen platforms, not exactly a lucky number. Look here at the screen."

He pointed to the large Military planning screen stationed in front off the large window; the three all looked and turned on their ears as the Admiral went on.

"The thirteen platforms were all knocked out around Africa, as you probably noticed they only landed in New Mombassa. Most of the carrier class ships completely ignored the guns and let the smaller destroyer types take on the MAC guns and the fleet. The only ship to escape was the Prophet of Regret's personal ship, we managed to mop up the rest easily but not at a cost." said Hood in a more to the point tone. "We are still looking for survivors in the debris field surrounding Earth and rummaging through what's left of the Covenant's ships. Your tasks now are to search the larger pieces of wreckage for anything that is still serviceable, a small platoon of men have been station on the job but most of the men are currently working on repairing what we have left, I just hope it is enough when the Covenant return, good luck to you all, dismissed."

The Spartans saluted and turned on their heel toward the door at the rear. They took the tram to the nearest armory to a pair of privates mopping the floor of the blue blood of the Covenant and the red of some unlucky human. They all grabbed space capable booster packs along with an array of weapons and headed to the hangar.

"We'll need to link up with the other marines stationed on the task, and find out where the most help is needed," said Fred.

"Not exactly the mission I would classify as Spartan material but whatever we can do to help," said Will in a weary voice.

She was glad that they were all doing much better; even though things had cooled down she couldn't help but wonder what would happen next. Would the MAC guns hold up next time the Covenant decided to attack? She hoped the Chief was ok; things just seemed to run much better

when he was around.

They rounded the corner and came into the hangar bay to find a Pelican waiting for them with a wide eyed pilot sitting up front.

"You all ready?" asked the young pilot.

"Yes private, let's head out," said Linda with a certain calm only snipers could find.

"Aye, Aye ma'am," said the pilot as he turned the engines on, a satisfying roar was emitted.

And with that they were gone.

8. Spartan 058 The Tale of a Sniper Chap 8

**Spartan 058 - The Tale of a Sniper
>Chapter 8 - Earth Orbit, Near MAC Station Cairo

The three sat in silence, absorbed in their personal thoughts. Linda had so many questions, but now wasn't the time to be asking them. She looked to her left and right and observed her two comrades; were they thinking the same thoughts as her? She was glad that the three of them were back together, but what of the Chief? Was he okay on this new Halo, along with Sergeant Johnson and their new accomplice Miranda Keyes? Little did she know that all of her questions would be answered in due time.

Lord Hood's voice broke the silence in the aft section, "All UNSC Repair Crews, abort current repairs and get these ships battle ready, we have Covenant Ships en Route. I repeat we have Covenant Ships en Route."

"Not this again, what's your plan Fred, we've gotta help out some how, and I'm not sure how much we can do from in here." said Will.

"Lets get back to the Cairo, I've got an idea."

John could feel the massive Forerunner ship exiting slipspace, he braced himself as it decelerated, it was only a matter of time before the fighting began. His tension was lightened as he heard a human voice come on the COM.

"We've got a new contact, unknown classification." said the voice.

"It isn't one of ours, take it out." said the familiar voice of Lord Hood.

John tried to respond "This is Spartan 117, can anyone hear me?"

"Isolate that signal. Master Chief would u mind telling me what you're doing on that ship?" said Lord Hood.

"Sir, finishing this fight," said John, and with that he ceased communications. He had work to do and this wasn't the time to be chatting.

Linda had heard it all, her happiness escalated, but she knew that she had a job to do, and she was going to do it the best she could.

"Lets link up with John, he may need help on that ship, and there isn't any one better for the job." said Fred.

"Ya, we can have the Pelican get close, and we can see what John has in mind, after all we do have the booster packs." said Will.

"John, do you read me, I repeat John, do you read me?" said Fred over the Spartan's private COM channel.

"Roger that Red Leader, what's the plan?" said John.

"We can give you support from outside the ship, we're in a Pelican near Cairo, what do you feel is the best idea?" said Fred.

"I'll search for some way to exit the ship and I'll mark myself with a waypoint," said John with an affirmative voice.

"Roger that 117, we'll stay near." said Fred.

Linda only hoped that things would run as smoothly as it sounded, she hated being in a ship with some Navy Jockey pushing the stick. They had waited nearly twenty minutes before The Chief's waypoint was activated, the battle outside was waging already and it was hard to try to not be noticed. The strangest part was that some of the Covenant's reinforcements were firing at their own ships from behind. The only reasonable explanation Linda could come up with was that their targeting systems were malfunctioning. She would probably hear something about it in some debriefing, if there ever was one.

With John safely aboard, the Pelican made its way back to the Cairo, dodging and weaving through debris and plasma bolts. Linda felt better knowing that John was indeed alive and well. He had told them that Miranda and Johnson were still unheard of and that he had to leave Halo in an attempt to stop the Prophet of Truth from using the strange ship.

"All UNSC ships do not fire upon the ship designated as Honor Without Mercy, this is Captain Miranda Keyes, do not fire upon the Covenant ship Honor Without Mercy!"

9. Spartan 058 The Tale of a Sniper Chap 9

**_Spartan 058 - The Tale of a Sniper
>Chapter 9 - ONI's Hive Base, Sydney Australia**

The Pelican touched down on the concrete pad of ONI's HIVE Base, the

four Spartans were guided into a nearby corridor where they were led to one of ONI's many meeting rooms. The four had come down to Earth on orders from Admiral Hood; it appeared as if Truth's ship and the rest of the remaining Covenant bugged out temporarily in an attempt to regroup their forces. Probes near the edge of the system had picked them up and were still continuing to monitor them. Above all, the strangest thing was the ship Honor Without Mercy; it had come in and announced itself as being under the command of Miranda Keyes. At first the Brass had thought of it as a trick but due to the other mysterious and odd things happening within the Covenant lately. Miranda had sent a message stating that she needed to land on Earth and explain some recent happenings; High Command had been a little reluctant but had decided to let the ship land near the ONI base under strict guard.

The Spartans were to be one of the first to step aboard the ship, or the first to welcome whatever came off. The Spartans stepped out of the complex into one of the many large ship landing pads. Honor Without Mercy was enormous, stretching nearly two kilometers long, around the pad was a mix and match group of UNSC Vehicles. Nearly thirty M808 tanks surrounded the pad along with several surface to air missile stations, two squadrons of Longswords flew around the ship in case a swarm of Seraphs flew out of the carriers shuttle bays. Honor Without Mercy stopped several hundred meters above the ground and produced a grav beam in the middle of the pad.

Linda could see three figures descended inside of the purplish light, she peered through the scope of her modified S2 and spotted Miranda and Johnson followed closely behind by an elite wearing some sort of odd armor. She immediately became alert at the sight of the Elite; she readied her rifle by putting a bolt in the chamber.

"Don't shoot! Don't shoot!" shouted Keyes, "This Elite is unarmed and peaceful, please don't shoot, we need to speak with the council as soon as possible." The tension within the room loosened somewhat but didn't fully secede. Admiral Hood stepped out of the sliding doors to meet with the group of Spartans and the approaching group of three.

"Do you mind telling me what this Covenant is doing here Commander?" asked Hood.

"There is no more Covenant, at least not one consisting of Elites," stated Keyes.

Two specially outfitted Warthogs approached the pad; they had been refurbished with rear seats to accommodate more personnel. Linda and John escorted the elite dubbed The Arbiter into one Warthog while Fred and Will took the other. The Marine in the front seat sat uneasy, the mere sight of the elite brought the marine into a bad mood, and he kept his M90 aimed at the Arbiter in case he made any wrong moves. They made their way around into a parking garage and into the some of the facilities inner sections. The four Spartans, the marines, and the Arbiter went through countless security checkpoints as they descended into the confines of the Hive. Linda knew they were meeting with the ONI Council to determine what was to

become of this Arbiter, she noticed the elite shift in stature as they four removed their helmets to provide a retina scan. Perhaps he thought that they were not humans at all, perhaps he thought of them as simple killing machines. After all he did refer to the Chief as "The Demon". Security lessened as they went on deeper into the Hive's inner workings, they eventually came to a long hallway with two marines posted at the end; one on either side of a pair of oak doors.

The Chief stepped forward, "We're to meet with the council."

One marine muttered something into his mic, and a few seconds later came a response. The marine looked at the Chief, "They're ready for you Chief."

"Thank you private," said the Chief.

The group walked into a dimly lit room with a section of the floor illuminated, the Arbiter knew it was his place and walked forward, the Spartans moved off to the side into the shadows. They stood there for a moment before they snapped to attention as a figure cleared its throat. The Arbiter came to attention but didn't seem to show a change of emotion.

The detailed reports sent to us by Cortana and Commander Keyes have explained the events that occurred aboard the Covenant city of High Charity, as well as the ring world, said the figure. I would ask you to explain in your own words exactly what happened.

The Arbiter relaxed somewhat and kept his voice neutral, "As you wish, when we received word at High Charity about the Prophet of Regret..."

Linda could only sit and listen as the Arbiter retold the happenings of the past few days, she had gathered bits and pieces from the Chief, but not nearly as much as she could have hoped for in the elite's story. She wondered, could this possibly help end the war against the Covenant? Would the humans and the excommunicated members of the Covenant come together to defeat the Prophets and their allied Brutes? Or would the Council just do away with the elite to improve moral; as true as it was, she couldn't imagine the Brass passing up a chance to end this war for another not so bright looking option. It would be a risky move in trying to trust the elites and their story. It was times like these that Linda appreciated that all she had to do was her job and to leave these kinds of dilemmas up to the higher brass.

Commander Keyes walked into the room and approached the Chief; they seemed to talk in silence for some time as the Arbiter went on with his tale. There was silence within the room for sometime and it appeared that the Arbiter had finished with the recollection of the events. They sat in silence as the groups took in what the Arbiter had said.

After some time, one of the figures spoke. "Assuming that we believe your story about the Covenant no longer being together, what would you have us do in a situation like this?"

The Arbiter spoke in a low tone, "I would have you do nothing, but you know as well as I that the humans need as much help as they can

get in this war."

Another voice chimed in with the rest, "And whose fault is that?! The Covenant have gone from planet to planet committing genocide for no reason other than that our existence offends you, and now you come asking for our assistance, and hope that you get it just as if nothing had happened between us!"

Several others threw comments much like this towards the elite as he stood helpless in the center of the room under the burning spotlight. "Silence!" said the original voice, "Surely you must understand our position, why working with you seems so unappealing?"

"I understand it more than you think."

"Perhaps we should do away with you, and get this over with." said another voice.

The Chief stepped forward, thinking this was a good time to interject. "That would be foolish and you all know it, this may be the one thing that we need to win this war. I've seen ten times as much combat as you, and this just may be crazy enough to work. Cortana and I have already witnessed the beginning of the excommunication of the Elites, Hunters, and Grunts."

Silence was in every corner of the room, the negative voice came in again, "And why should we believe you? The first chance you get to befriend your enemy. Aren't these the same creatures that wiped out the majority of your team! Didn't Dr. Hasley put any sense of loyalty into you freaks?"

Linda knew exactly what was running through John's mind, she was one of those freaks too, and she knew the speaker to be none other than Colonel Ackerson, the SPARTAN Projects main rival. She was angry at him, but couldn't help to agree with him on some points.

A fist slammed on the table bringing everyone to a silent stand still, "That is quite enough Colonel, step out of line again and I'll have you off this Council so fast you'd think you were hit by a warthog."

There was silence followed by a quiet apology. "Will you turn the darned lights on; if we're going to try and intimidate someone we might as well do it to their face." The lights turned on as the Spartans recognized the voice of General Strauss. "Now let's cut the crap Arbiter, even before we form some form of cooperation or peace agreement we need you to show us something as a sign of grace. Information maybe, anything that would show that you are willing to be with us."

For the first time in several minutes, the Arbiter spoke again, "I have little information about the Covenant's battle plan, I rarely returned to our homeworld and as a ship commander the extent of my knowledge is where our ships have been deployed."

"So there is a Covenant homeworld," Strauss questioned, "We'll need you to enlighten us more on that. Maybe you should tell us why the Covenant worship the Forerunner, and are so intent on wiping out all of mankind."

A small smile formed on the face of the Arbiter, "All members of the Covenant know how we came to be and what our intentions are."

"Perhaps you can elaborate on that for us?" asked Strauss.

The Arbiter took a breath and looked around at his onlookers. "Very well then, I shall tell you how the Covenant came to be."

Linda listened through it all. She was appalled at how much corruption and tragedy was mixed into such a powerful society. She also could see how hurt the Arbiter must be, how they went with the Prophets false truths and propaganda. It all made sense to her now, at least for the most part. As soon as the Arbiter was finished, she saw John risk a chance to talk to the Arbiter. She and the rest of the team quickly fell in step.

"So Arbiter, what do you have planned for us next?" said the Chief.

"We must gather more of my brethren and their ships if we are to stop the Prophets once and for all," said the ever mysterious Arbiter.

"And were do you suppose we are supposed to find them?" asked the Chief.

"Why, the home world of the Sangheili of course."

To be continued?

10. Spartan 058 The Tale of a Sniper Chap 10

**_Spartan 058 - The Tale of a Sniper " Part II
>Chapter 10 " En Route to Sangheili homeworld
Silone**

Aboard UNSC Destroyer Demosthenes

The Demosthenes, Chamarajanagar, and Honor Without Mercy emerged from slipspace. The two former billowing out of the giant hole that remained as the two titanic ships emerged while Honory Without Mercy glided out gracefully from the alternate space. All three flew parallel towards what was now known as the homeworld of the Sangheili, Silone. Linda sat eighty decks down between layers and layers of durasteel, only able to take in the beauty of the planet from a tiny video feed in the weapons storage area.

John had sent the three other Spartans down below decks to keep them busy, and to keep their minds of the recent happenings. They all knew as well as John did that this new situation could completely change the whole outlook of the war. Sure they had always fought the Brutes, and other members of the updated Covenant, but never alongside the Sangheili. She was now supposed to fight with what she had once knew to be her mortal enemies, sure the elites had been betrayed by their own leaders, and found out that all that they had known previously had been a complete sham, but what about all of those humans that they killed in cold blood?

She was beginning to think to much she said to herself, after all the Chief had sent her down her to keep her head out of exactly what was coming to mind. She finished stowing the gear and headed to the lift with Fred and Will.

"What do you think this new place is going to be like?" asked Will, "I mean sure, it looks nice on the view screen, but it's probably no Earth."

"I don't know, I'll be excited either way to get off of this damned ship," chimed in Fred.

Linda could only sit and laugh at the two, she was glad that the four of them had finally been reunited. She hated the idea of losing another one of her brothers, but she knew that within these next few weeks that could become an all too real possibility.

The three exited the lift to find John, the Arbiter, along with Sergeant Johnson and two other marine escorts. She knew the plan as well as all of them; they had to travel to Silon's capital city in order to receive an audience with the Hierarchs of the Sangheili Council. They knew that word had probably not reached Silone about the excommunication of half the Covenant, and that it would be quite a task to rally the Sangheili in a fight against the presumably powerful Prophets.

They all entered the _D77 " TC Pelican_ and started their decent planet side. The Arbiter had told them little on what they were supposed to do or of the customs of the Sangheili. What if they were to do something wrong and end up paying a price that could jeopardize the whole mission? She decided someone had to ask what they were supposed to do; she was about to throw out the question as soon as the Arbiter came out of the cockpit who had most likely stopped them from getting shot down by one of the many orbiting ships, but Sergeant Johnson had beater her to the point.

"Excuse me Mr. Arbiter, but could you at least shed a little bit more light on what we're supposed to do when we get down there? How can we be sure that we won't be arrested and used as leverage in this war?" asked the Sergeant.

"Please don't call me that anymore Sergeant. I was given that title by the Prophets; I no longer bear the right to wear it. If you're wondering what you shall call me from now on please address me as Gann Aonlum seeing as that is my given name. Secondly, I ask that you trust me and my people, you have shown me your good faith and now we as an honorable race shall show you ours," commented the newly named Aonlum.

"Well, seeing as that's probably the best answer I'm goin to get from one of you guys I'll just have to be ok with that," said the Sergeant.

Taking the conversation to be over with the two Aonlum went on with what kind of things were going to happen once they landed planetside. He told them that the High Council had been reluctant to let outsiders come down peacefully, but then again they were curious as to hear the rest of the story that Aonlum had condensed down for them with the short radio time.

Honor Without Mercy was to remain outside of an orbit and to maintain a safekeeping watch over the two human ships. They watched as two squadrons of Seraph fighters surrounded the Pelican and guided the dropship towards the capital city of Corinphi. They landed on a small pad next to one of the most complex and beautiful buildings that Linda had ever seen; she noted all of the intricate sculpture and artwork surrounding the buildings main spire. She also saw all of the hidden weaponry that was placed in and all around the strangely beautiful architecture; apparently the engineers had been as keen to the defenses of the building as well as the overall artwork.

Aonlum exchanged a brief word with the apparent leader of a heavily armed Sangheili escort, Aonlum told them the story as they walked through endless corridors towards some apparent meeting, apparently the few members of the Covenant on the planet had staged a mutiny consisting of guerrilla tactics and sabotage. The Sangheili forces on the planet managed to suppress the attack, but by doing so have not had a chance to hear their motives.

Aonlum, the arrangement of Elites, and the few humans made their way to a large chamber inside the building; it was roughly the size of a football field with a center platform surrounded by many rising platforms. The ragtag group made their way to the ground floor as hundreds of Sangheili politicians and officials started to migrate into the room. They sat in silence, and discomfort as the seats were meant for the build of something clearly inhuman. Finally nine robed figures entered the room and sat at a large semi circular orating platform that surrounded the center speaking platform. The council was called to order as Aonlum stepped up to state his claims, Linda could only imagine how old this must be getting for the Sangheili who had just several days ago stated the very same story to a fairly similar group of beings.

"I come here to present to you the story which I have just recently witnessed on the Covenant City of High Charity, the betrayal of the Prophets, and the real story about the so called Great Journey," stated Aonlum with practiced rhetoric.

There were some gasps at the last remark towards the all important Great Journey, but no real outbreak erupted. The council told Aonlum to continue with his accusations. He told them of the dealings on the two Halos and the slow excommunication of the Sangheili, Unggoy, and Lekgolo from the Covenant. He went on about his appointment as Arbiter and the dealings with the supposed heretic leader and the Gravemind, who had reinforced his suspicions about the Great Journey. He finished his story with the final attack on Earth and the shaky alliance with the humans who had been the Covenant's enemy up until these events. He thanked the High Council and retook his seat with the group of humans.

"Thank you for coming to us and shedding light on some awkward happenings that we have been experiencing here on Silone as well, it seems that indeed we have been betrayed by the Prophets and that much has been hidden from us," said the apparent head of the Council, "We also would like to reinstate you with the title of Arbiter, one that has true meaning behind it. If not for you Aonlum dire consequences may have befallen the entire Sangheili race along with those of the Unggoy and Lekgolo. We as a species will need a figurehead and someone to lead them against the tyranny of the Covenant. I am sure that all of the Sangheili share this idea and would be over joyous if

you would accept the title and honor of that position once again."

"Thank you your honorary, I gladly accept the title and position of Arbiter once again," said the newly christened Arbiter.

"What then Arbiter would you suggest as our first plan of action towards the newly formed Covenant?" said the High Council Member.

"We shall take revenge for every Sangheili killed in the name of the Great Journey, for every being ever trampled by the tyrannous Prophets, and for ever life taken before it's time," said the Aonlum. "We shall let them see the true might of the Sangheili and all that follow them, we will make them pay."

****Author's Note****

****Wow, seriously, who thought that this chapter would ever come? I knew that some of you doubted me, but it's finally here. A lot of the names in this chapter come straight from MrClarks fanfic The End of a War. He let me use some material, and I want to thank him for it and to give him credit for some awesome names and story elements. If you have any questions please feel free to ask, thanks everyone!****

End
file.